

DRAFT
Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP)
Conservation Strategy (CS) Workgroup Meeting Notes

June 18, 2007, 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Room 1131, 1416 Ninth St., Sacramento

Handouts and Associated Documents

- Agenda
- Draft Delta flow objectives (NGO “straw-man” proposal for conservation criteria to be used in options evaluation)
- Summary from Conservation bundle evaluation document

Action Items and Key Recommendations

- PRE’s will provide a set of criteria to the Workgroup prior to the 6/25 meeting for flow conditions necessary to meet water export objectives in a below-normal rain year
- NGO’s will update their flow criteria (“Draft Delta flow objectives”) to be at a comparable level of detail (i.e., flow conditions necessary for fish conservation in a below-average rain year)
- SAIC to provide PREs and NGOs with a list of flow categories relevant to covered fish species for which the PREs and NGOs would provide their recommended criteria

Meeting goal

The Workgroup meeting goal is to provide more detailed guidance to the consultant (SAIC) on the approach that will be used in the upcoming CS Options evaluation.

Near-term schedule

Monday (6/25): CS Workgroup meeting to finalize guidance on evaluation approach.

Friday (6/29): SC meeting. Workgroup expected to recommend evaluation approach to the SC and SC anticipated to approve or modify. Consultant will then implement the options evaluation based on the approved approach.

Conservation options evaluation

Presentation by Paul Cylinder (SAIC). Guidance from SC last week was that the evaluation approach should be qualitative; the committee agreed that such an approach is appropriate for the current schedule and for information needs at this stage in the planning process. The evaluation will not include extensive quantitative analysis and will not be based on new runs of hydrodynamic models. P. Cylinder suggested that each of the four conservation options be evaluated using both conservation objectives/assumptions (developed by NGO-led stakeholder group) and operational assumptions (to be provided by PRE group), under the assumption that a single set of flow criteria may not be developed at this time. The analysis would focus on structural conveyance stressors using flow/operational criteria provided (expected to be similar across the 4 structural options) so that the results are comparable among the four conservation options. Additional conservation elements addressing important stressors (e.g., toxics, predation, introduced species, turbidity) would be evaluated to provide a comparison of CS Options with regard to differential conservation opportunities the options provide for implementing these conservation elements. All conservation elements would be evaluated in much greater detail during development of the draft conservation strategy framework documents. The options evaluation could use the 17

evaluation criteria, modified as appropriate, that were used in the Conservation Elements Bundles analysis completed in May.

P. Cylinder noted that the CS Options evaluation will be one source of information among several that would inform development of the BDCP framework at the end of 2007. Other key documents would include the BDCP independent science advisors report and DRMS Phase 2 risk analysis.

Discussion

At the Steering Committee meeting on 6/15 members agreed that the two main groups of stakeholders, NGO's and PRE's, would each provide a set of flow/operations criteria to the CS Workgroup to be used to evaluate the structural CS Options. The criteria may provide a range of conditions for the evaluation; the flow criteria provided by NGO's would provide what they identify as adequate conditions in the Delta for fish to be conserved, and the water export criteria would enable water export objectives to be reached. A small group of NGO members today provided to the Workgroup a draft ("strawman") list of "Proposed Delta Flow Objectives"; it described flow levels and timing necessary for long-term fish conservation (see Handouts and Associated documents). This document was briefly reviewed. Flow/operation criteria from the PRE group are still in development; PRE's export targets are outlined in the Covered Activities document.

There was difference of understanding among stakeholders about the type (e.g., flow standards, habitat restoration opportunities) and level of specificity of conservation criteria necessary for the options evaluation, and whether and how to analyze additional stressors in the coming evaluation.

There was also discussion about whether and how to include and evaluate stressors that are not directly related to the structural conveyance options (toxics, exotics, etc.). Chuck Hanson commented that concurrent analysis of the additional stressors with the conveyance stressors could only be done at a very general level of evaluation, if at all. He stated that important details necessary for the upcoming evaluation of the four CS Options include amount of water, seasonal timing, and location of pumping and export activities relative to fish populations. Monthly flow levels for different types of water years are probably not necessary to complete the analysis.

Kenny Watkins noted that the Farm Bureau perspective and other stakeholder objectives may not fit squarely with either the NGO or PRE objectives.

Cathy Kelly (DWR), who works on CALSIM hydrodynamic model, briefly explained model parameterization to the Workgroup and described constraints to this quantitative model.

Most members agreed to the general format of the evaluation approach suggested by Consultants. Ara Azhderian recommended, however, that a single set of flow/operations criteria be used rather than a NGO set for fish conservation objectives and a separate PRE set for water export objectives. PRE's will provide a set of flow/operations criteria to the Workgroup prior to the 6/25 meeting with water export objectives and flow conditions necessary in a below-average rain year to meet those objectives. NGO's will revise their conservation criteria (Draft Delta flow objectives) to be at comparable level of detail (i.e., flow conditions necessary for fish conservation in a below-average rain year). See also Action Items and Key Recommendations. Consultants to provide list of flow/operations variables (relevant to the qualitative evaluation of options) to PREs and NGOs to use in developing their criteria (i.e., values to assign to those variables).

Public comment

No comments at this meeting.

Meeting Attendees*Representatives*

Anthony Saracino (TNC)
Pete Rawlings (SAIC)
Paul Cylinder (SAIC)
Ara Azhderian (SLDMWD)
Will Stelle (Resources Agency)
Barbara McDonell (USBR)
Scott Cantrell (DFG)
Rosalie Del Rosario (NMFS)
Kenny Watkins (CFFB)
Sue Ramos (Westlands WD)
Tracy Ligon (SCVWD)
Laura Simonek (MWDSO)
Cindy Darling (Resources Agency)
Dale Myers (Zone 7)
Frank Michny (USBR)
Kim Delfino (Defenders of Wildlife)
Ann Hayden (Environmental Defense)
Laura King Moon (State Water Contractors)

Telephone call-in attendees

Karen Scarborough (Resources Agency)
Melissa Helton (USFWS)
Richard Roos-Collins (American Rivers)
John Rubin (SLDMWD)
Craig Hanson

Additional attendees (partial list)

Dan Kratville
Neil Clipperton
Chuck Hanson
Cliff Schultz
Judy Bendix
Bill Harrell
John Hewitt
Chet Bolling
Chris Beale
Cathy Kelly
Dave Zezulak
John Kirlin